

**WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:**

1. A computer system comprising a plurality of distinct backplane modules wherein:
  - a) a first backplane module comprises a plurality of connectors to receive power from one or several power supply backplane modules to distribute said power to the backplane modules other than first module and than said power backplane modules, and
  - b) said first backplane module may also comprise a plurality of connectors to establish high-speed point-to-point connections to distribute data to some, or all other backplane modules, and
  - c) same first backplane module may also comprise a plurality of connectors to establish connections between an active management card and some, or all the other backplane modules to distribute management signals from said card, and
  - d) all the backplane modules may be passive, and
  - e) all the backplane modules except the power backplane modules may receive power and data through the connectors of the first backplane module, and
  - f) all the backplane modules may receive management signals through the connectors of the first backplane module.
2. The computer system of claim 1 where the high-speed point-to-point data connections are being routed to one, or several switched fabric backplane modules, and/or to one or several active switch fabric cards using one or more connectors of said first backplane module.
3. The computer system of claim 2 where said high-speed point-to-point data connections use optical links and connectors.